SHIKOU SHOUNEN [ONE] FUJIWARA KAORU

OOTA SHUPPAN

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Lovely Strange Dark
SHIKOU SHOUNEN
"THOUGHT BOY"
BY FUJIWARA KAORU
CHAPTER 1
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lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

CHAPTER 1

synchronized

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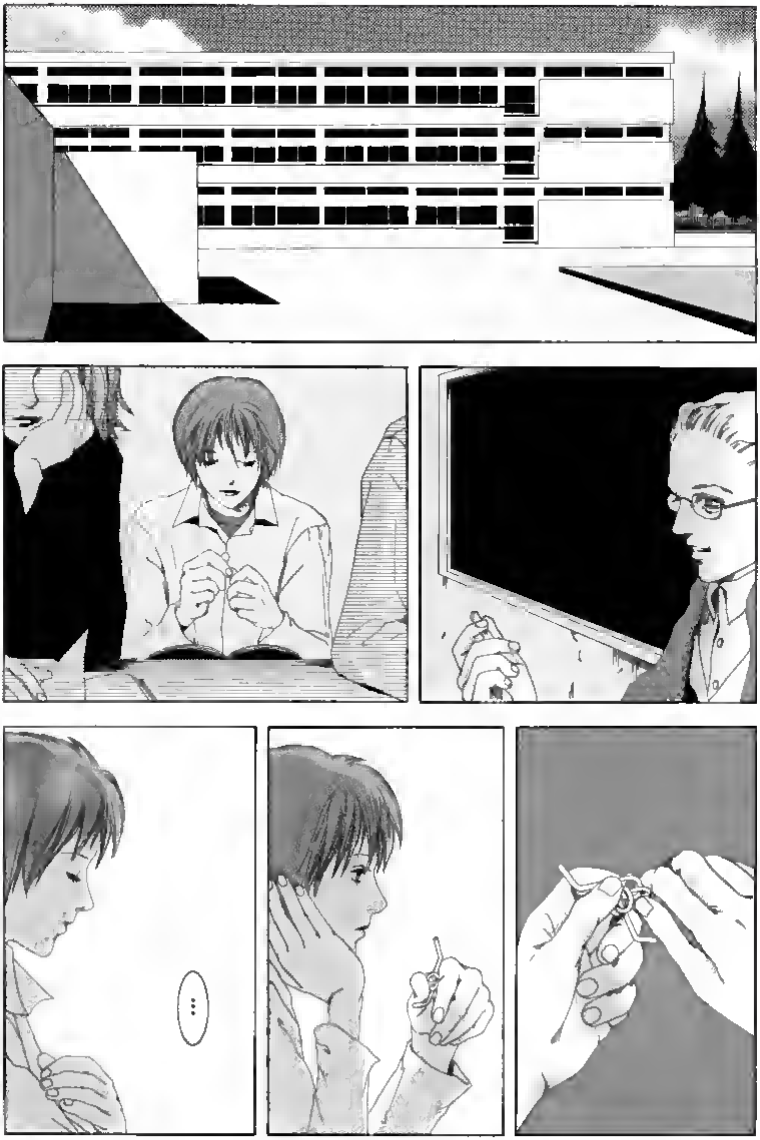


CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
LET ME TRY IT.
HEY, YOU HAD A PUZZLE RING DURING CLASS, DIDN'T YOU?
NO WAY.
THAT'S REALLY HARD, YOU KNOW.
IF YOU CAN'T GET IT RIGHT AWAY, DOES THAT MAKE YOU STUPID?
HM.

tap
tap
thump
clack

I WON'T MISS
IT'S FINE
I TOLD YOU NOT TO PUT THE TARGET IN THE ENTRANCEWAY, DIDN'T I?
HEY, I'M BORED OF IT ALREADY.
THIS IS ALL THERE IS TO DO HERE.
I NEVER MISS ANYMORE.
YOU HAVE NO CLUE HOW HIGH THE PRICE ON YOUR HEAD'S GOTTEN.
YOUR LIFE WILL BE AT RISK IF YOU GO OUT

OUR GROUP'S STANDPOINT IS PRETTY CONVENIENT.
THEN I CAN ONLY BE HUMAN WHEN I'M ON A JOB, KILLING.
THEY DON'T WANT YOU WANDERING AROUND OUTSIDE MORE THAN NECESSARY FOR YOUR WORK.
OUR GROUP DOESN'T WANT TO LOSE A HITMAN OF YOUR CALIBER, EITHER.
ON THE OTHER HAND,
WELL PUT.
THOUGH YOU DON'T ACTUALLY LIKE KEEPING WATCH OVER ME.
SEEMS PRETTY FAIR, RIGHT?
THE AGENT IN CHARGE OF YOU COMES TO PERSONALLY COOK YOUR MEALS.

HEAT THEM UP AND SERVE YOURSELF AS USUAL.
BREAKFAST AND LUNCH FOR TOMORROW ARE IN THE FRIDGE.
EAT WITH ME SOMETIME
YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY?
A NEW TOY.
HERE, TAKE THIS
THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT "EATING WITH YOU" IN THERE
MY JOB IS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR JOB AND MEALS

I'M SUPPOSED TO BE MAKING SOME MAJOR CASH.
YOU ONLY BUY ME CHEAP STUFF.
THAT ONE'S BEST PLAYED BY YOURSELF
A PUZZLE RING?
IT'S BETTER FOR A MINOR NOT TO HAVE ACCESS TO LARGE SUMS OF MONEY.
YOU DON'T TRUST ME?
I'M MANAGING YOUR FINANCES PROPERLY.
click

THERE'S NO WAY I'D BE STAYING IN THIS ROOM LIKE A GOOD BOY!
IF NOT,
I DO
TRUST YOU
click
pop!

BUT IT SEEMS LIKE YOUR STOMACH BOTHERS YOU ON OCCASION
I KNOW IT'S NONE OF MY BUSI-NESS,
DRINKING COFFEE BLACK IS BAD FOR THE STOMACH
I DON'T DO WELL WITH MILK.
I KNOW IT'S NOT GOOD, BUT IT'S BECOME A HABIT.
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK

click
THIS IS SURPRISINGLY HARD...
...
SORRY I'M A LITTLE LATE
ARE YOU THAT HUNGRY?
...YES?
SO YOU WERE COMING

BYE
OH!
COFFEE
YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF MY FOOD, RIGHT?
SO MAKE IT.
MAKE ME SOME COFFEE, TOO.
SO I HAVE PLENTY TO DRINK AFTER I EAT
CAN'T YOU DO COFFEE YOUR-SELF?
drip
drip

ALSO, THERE'S NO NEED TO LET YOU SEE MY WHOLE FACE
I'M WORK-ING
YOU NEVER TAKE OFF YOUR SUN-GLASSES
HEY
BLACK WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE
IT'S DONE
MILK
.....
IT'S BEEN ONE THING OR ANOTHER WITH YOU LATELY
CHILDREN SHOULDN'T DRINK IT BLACK!

Black
IS BAD FOR YOUR STOM-ACH
BLACK
Beep
Click

.....
OH?
H—HUH?
YOU'RE FINE WITH MILK, NOW?
YOU AREN'T DRINKING IT BLACK TODAY.
IT'S GREAT WHEN IT HAPPENS SUB-CONSCIOUSLY, WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE PRESSURE
TASTES DO CHANGE.
OH, RIGHT. CAN I GET YOUR HELP GRABBING A PACKAGE FROM ON TOP OF THE LOCK-ERS?

What was that feeling, just now—
THANKS WAS IT HEAVY?
AH,
NO
what someone else was doing!
It was as if I was copying..

BUT THE SKYLIGHT UP THERE DOESN'T LET IN MUCH
SORRY
I WANT TO FEEL SOME BREEZE.

YOU PROMISED YOU WOULDN'T OPEN THE CURTAINS OR THE WINDOW

BETRAY YOU?
NOT GOING TO HAPPEN

I'M NOT GOING TO JUST LEAVE OR ANY-THING
NOT UNLESS YOU GUYS BETRAY ME

LOTS OF MILK THIS TIME
I DIDN'T FORGET TO MAKE THE COFFEE
THANK YOU
A JOB
I'LL PULL IT OFF WELL, LIKE USUAL
YOU'RE UP FOR A JOB SOON, RIGHT?
I'M SURE WE'LL BE TALKING ABOUT IT TOMORROW

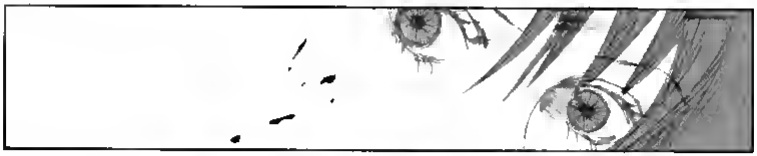
EVEN IF I WASN'T HIDING LIKE THIS, I COULD PROTECT MYSELF.
SO!
YUP.
TRUTH IS...
YOU ARE TOP-NOTCH, FOR YOUR AGE.
I'M SURE YOU WILL
IS BECAUSE YOU COME
THE REASON I DON'T LEAVE THIS ROOM
I DON'T GET YOU
THE HECK...

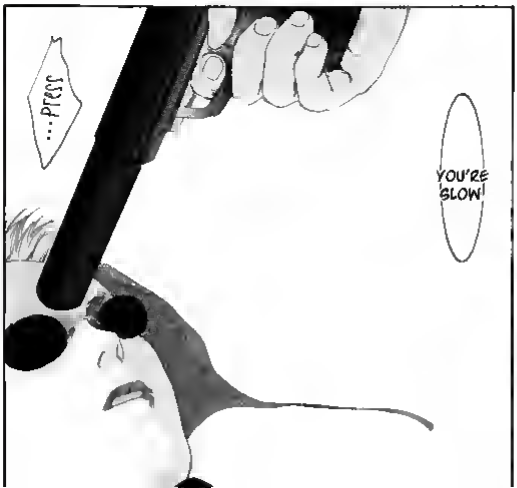
HOW ABOUT ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS—?
HOW ABOUT THAT? IT'S DOUBLING AS A MESSAGE BOARD
WHO'LL GO?
THE PROFESSOR NEEDS A MOUSE FOR HIS NEXT LESSON, SO HE SAID TO GET ONE.
THINK
LET'S GO
WHOEVER LOSES GETS THE MOUSE
Does my hand know how to throw them—?
But this is my first time at darts
BULLSEYE, YOU'RE GOOD
.....
WOW!

CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
YOU'RE REALLY EARLY.
WHAT'S —
!?
HM?
CREAK
WHO ARE YOU?

PAUSE
LET'S BEGIN THE MAZE EXPERI-MENT
SO YOU CAN SEE BETTER...
IF EVERYONE COULD COME TO THE FRONT

HE SAID TO GO TO THE FRONT
AH.



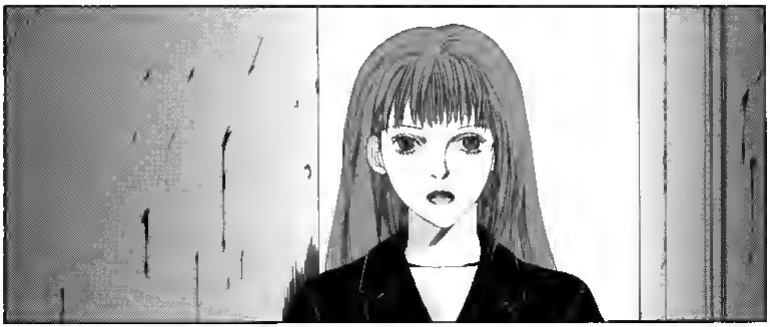

...PTSST
YOU'RE SLOW!

TCH!
CHINK

BANG
IS THIS YOUR ANSWER?
WHAT THE...
Ah, again...
That feeling like I'm copying someone else's movements-
But whose?

IT'S SAID THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER ONE OF THESE MICE COMPLETES A MAZE,
ALL OTHER MICE OF THE SAME STRAIN ON EARTH BECOME ABLE TO COMPLETE THE SAME MAZE
IF YOU WANT TO HEAR SOME-THING STRANGE
GENETICS REALLY ARE STRANGE
THE OFFSPRING OF TWO MICE WHO DO WELL ON THE MAZE WILL THEM-SELVES BE EVEN BETTER
OF COURSE, IT'S NOT A COMMONLY ACCEPTED THEORY
ANY SCIENTIST WOULD GET ANGRY HEARING THAT
THEY CAN'T COMMUNI-CATE, SO THAT CAN'T BE, RIGHT?
DON'T YOU THINK THAT THINGS LIKE THAT CAN HAPPEN?
.....

Even though it was my first time, my hand knew...
Maybe that, and even more differences before that, ones so small that I didn't notice them,
—... If that were true, then it would mean there must be another person just like me.
are all me synchronizing with someone else's abilities—
...



! THIS GUY —
HE'S A BOUNTY HUNTER.

WHAT IS THIS —

HOW DID HE FIND THIS PLACE?
AND WHERE'S THE BOY —?

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU
SO YOU'RE NOT HURT,
GOOD
...
THE LOCATION OF THE SAFE HOUSE LEAKED FROM OUR END.
I APOLOGIZE
HUH!?
AH, UM—
YOU MUST HAVE CONFUSED ME
WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

WHERE DID HE GO...
REALLY...
NOT HIM...?
cafe

Seems like there's someone who looks a lot like me.

AH.

And if that person is exactly like me?

Maybe he was also able to get it unfastened.....

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